

# THE ADVENTIST Review

July 10, 1997

World Edition

## Guided by a Dream

A Story  
of Three  
Sisters



**The Silence of God**  
**Eight Ways to Deal With Guilt**



# LETTERS

## Going for the Jugular

I read Roy Adams' "Going for the Jugular" (May 8) with real excitement. What could be next? A call to put the wine industry out of business? After all, our witness against alcohol has been no less strong than that against tobacco. But why limit it to wine? Our goal should be "the total dismantlement of the [alcohol] industry, worldwide." But maybe we should start with McDonald's and dismantle the entire flesh food industry, worldwide.

I am praying daily that before we embark on *any* such crusade, we will search the Scriptures. Where does God ask us to employ the coercive power of the state to prevent individuals from harming themselves by what they choose to eat, drink, or otherwise ingest? Asking the state to force people to do what Adventists have been told to *persuade* them to do is dangerous business.

Notwithstanding our good intentions, when we set this wagon rolling, we will eventually end up beneath the wheels. And we can read *that* in the Bible.

—Earl Aagaard

ANGWIN, CALIFORNIA

I want to acknowledge all that we Adventists have done to help people stop smoking and oppose tobacco in all its forms. Further, it is true that we were opposed to smoking long before it was popular to be "anti-tobacco."

But Adams overstates a bit in saying that "we were the lone voice out in the wilderness on this issue." At least I

believe our Mormon friends would think so. Maybe here is an opportunity to form a worldwide single-issue coalition between Mormons and Adventists against this insidious—and very profitable—poison.

—Larry Mitchell

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

## Wasteful Spending?

Reading Carlos Medley's "Spring Meeting Convenes in California" (May 8), I find that 100 people from all over the globe were transported and housed at Loma Linda for the occasion.

Recently I read that last fall a larger number were brought to Costa Rica to take care of the worldwide business.

Medley's article also reported that 1996 world mission offerings decreased by 5.67 percent.

For the sake of economy, couldn't our wise administrators and leaders devise a way whereby one meeting a year could take care of the business? I am for cutting corners. Shouldn't we all be?

—Jeremia Florea

BEE BRANCH, ARKANSAS

## Tough, Rugged, Heartrending

Our English teaching staff here appreciated Jay Edison's article, "Tough, Rugged, Heartrending" (Apr. 10), about our next-door-neighbor country, Kyrgyzstan. We had the privilege of meeting Jay and Vonnice while they



were there, enjoying their hospitality and hearing about their experiences firsthand. We strongly identify with Jay's experiences and can only echo the cry "The harvest is great, and few are the reapers!"

It takes a while for the *Review* to reach us here, but we read it from cover to cover. May God continue to guide you in selecting articles and stories that touch people where they live.

—Lonita Fattic

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN

## Faith Alive!

Thank you, Calvin Rock, for writing, and thanks to the *Review* for publishing, a column (Faith Alive!) that is consistently outstanding. The ideas are thought-provoking, yet always measured and balanced.

In my opinion Rock is representative of the best in Adventist thinking. He is reasonable and in step with the times, while still showing an awareness of and appreciation for those things that make us a distinctive people.

—Loron Wade

MONTEMORELOS, MEXICO

## Worship Ways

Regarding "Worship Ways" (May NAD Edition). What drew me to the Adventist Church 17 years ago was its difference from other churches. It was reverent. There were beautiful amens instead of loud clapping. It was a place to feel God's presence and to hear His voice speaking to you.



In the Reformed church in which I had been raised I experienced those "creative ways of expression" that Loretta Parker Spivey writes of. I went to the youth activities and the Jesus Christ Superstar concerts, which were to bring the youth to the church. But why did I go? I went for the rock music—and because it was OK with my parents (after all, it was a church function). I didn't go to be closer to the Lord, and it didn't help me to be closer to Him.

I don't feel that "because youth and 'many adults' love it" is good reasoning to invite this type of worship into our church. Whom is it that we are to please?

—Cathy Mayer

VIA FAX

### Worth Every Rand

Because of the very low value of the rand, three of us here share the cost of a subscription to the weekly *Review*, amounting to a little more than R100 each. The lady who receives the magazine keeps track of who has read each issue, as it is circulated among five of us. We feel that the blessing of reading the *Review* is something we cannot do without. Thank you for this soul-enriching material.

—Everal Hurlow

ANERLY, SOUTH AFRICA

### Shocked by Isaiah (cont.)

I thought Clifford Goldstein's "Shocked by Isaiah 53" (May NAD Edition) was, on the whole, a helpful article. I enthusiastically agree that justification is the pivotal point in the Christian experience and in itself reclaims us from sin.

However, I find this sentence very difficult to accept: "Yet the new birth and the new life aren't what save us; rather, they're what happen *after* we become saved."

To me, it's like saying to a heart transplant recipient, "Your new heart

doesn't save you; it's the result of being saved." Surely the operation was a salvational act. But the new heart is salvation on an ongoing basis.

—Michael Prewitt

RAPIDAN, VIRGINIA

Like Goldstein, I have been perplexed by "how a person can be born into the Adventist Church, raised in the Adventist Church, educated in it from cradle roll to graduate school, and yet still not understand . . . justification by faith alone."

I was raised an Adventist in Battle Creek, Michigan, with grades 5, 6, 10-12, college, and seminary in Adventist education, and I cannot understand how one could miss it. I still remember some of the lively discussions we had in college about our salvation. We certainly knew that our faith was placed in Christ.

I think of Christ's words about having ears but failing to hear. For some, the call of the world was so strong that all they saw were God's prohibitions telling them not to go that way. Goldstein was changed by God. He became hungry to know God's truth. That always makes a difference.

—David Manzano

ROCKWOOD, TENNESSEE

I am 57, raised and educated from cradle roll through graduate school in the Adventist Church. I still must be one of those Adventists who do not understand justification by faith alone as described by Goldstein.

What I don't understand is who the executioner was if Jesus died the second death as complete legal punishment for sin.

—Richard W. Ludders, D.D.S.

SAIPAN ADVENTIST CLINIC

# ADVENTIST Review

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# ADVENTIST Review

"Behold, I come quickly . . ."

Our mission is to uplift Jesus Christ through stories of His matchless love, news of His present workings, help for knowing Him better, and hope in His soon return.

The *Adventist Review* (ISSN 0161-1119), published since 1849, is the general paper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is published by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and is printed 40 times a year each Thursday except the first Thursday of each month by the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Periodicals postage paid at Hagerstown, MD 21740. Copyright © 1997.

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E-mail: Internet: reviewmag@adventist.org  
CompuServe network: 74617,15

**Subscriptions:** US\$38.97 for 40 issues, US\$50.97 for 52 issues. Add \$10.20 postage for addresses outside North America. To order, send your name, address, and payment to your local Adventist Book Center or *Adventist Review* Subscription Desk, Box 1119, Hagerstown, MD 21741. Single copy, US\$2.50. Prices subject to change without notice.

**Subscription queries and changes of address:** Call 1-800-456-3991 or 301-791-7000, ext. 2439.

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Adventist Review*, 55 West Oak Ridge Drive, Hagerstown, MD 21740.

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Vol. 174, No. 28

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# God of the Long Haul

WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

I'm in it for the long haul. I think God is looking for others who are too.

A besetting sin of Seventh-day Adventists is the fragility of our faith. Every now and then I hear someone say, "If this [or that] were true [or not true], I could not remain a Seventh-day Adventist." They make it sound as though our teachings and movement were built on a flimsy foundation that is always at risk of collapse. No! God gave us a solid platform of truth and continues to demonstrate His presence and leading of this people, in spite of our failings.

So give me men and women who turn their faces to the wind and the sting of the salt spray, who give their word and keep it, who commit their lives to their Saviour and will not turn back.

Ellen White's very first vision was about the long haul. After the disappointment of 1844, most of those who had expected Jesus to return gave up their belief. But Ellen saw God's faithful people toiling onward and upward on a narrow path toward the glorious day (see *Early Writings*, pp. 13-20).

Many start, few finish: it has ever been thus. Said the wise man: "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof" (Eccl. 7:8). One of Jesus' most famous parables—the sower and the soils (Matt. 13:3-8, 18-23)—describes the various receptions of the gospel as it touches human hearts. Of the four situations described, only the last—the good soil—results in the full and sustained acceptance that leads to an abundant harvest.

The way you train for a marathon is totally different from preparation for a sprint. Anyone who completes a marathon runs the last miles on his or her mind rather than on the body.

We are all in a marathon. Perhaps if Jesus were physically among us today, He would recast His well-loved parable to read something like this:

A race official organized a marathon and sent out invitations. The first man who got the word immediately signed up, but almost as soon forgot all about it. Another person entered and showed up on race day. He started off with the others and sprinted to the front of the pack, but when the sun beat down, he dropped out. Someone else

started the race and kept right on the schedule developed through months of training. But as the 13-mile mark passed, and then the 15, she began to lose interest. It didn't seem worth the effort, and at the 17-mile marker she quit and got on the bus. But another runner kept on even though his body ached and his feet hurt. And at last he crossed the line and received the gold medallion around his neck.

Although I run marathons (very slowly!), only in later years have I begun to see life in terms of the long haul. From the time I entered the employ of the church, the pattern of my life was a new responsibility every two to three years. Then toward the end of 1982 I was asked to take over the editorship of the *Adventist Review*. Although a few editors held this office for just short periods, most stayed long-term—in its 148

years the *Review* has had but 10 editors. My thinking changed, had to change. I was in it for the long haul.

About two years ago we began a major restructuring of the church paper. The work involved was extraordinary, but the end result—the "new" *Review*—has been extraordinary in its reception by Adventists of all ages and all backgrounds. I praise the Lord for His leading in the endeavor.

But He has taught me a new sense of the long haul through this experience. The new *Review* involved heavy expenses—color, more pages, refined design, etc. It was launched in faith: the budgets for 1996 had already been set and made no provision for the new expenses. I have always been a fiscal conservative, and the thought of a large operating loss at the end of 1996 bothered me. But the Lord seemed to assure me: "Go forward, and the money will come." And at the close of the year the *Adventist Review* showed not a loss, but a small gain!

So I no longer hope for the time when the hill will be behind me and I will break out on the plateau of easy times. I'm in it for the long haul, even though the path will always be up and sometimes steep.

The best part is: God is in it for the long haul too.

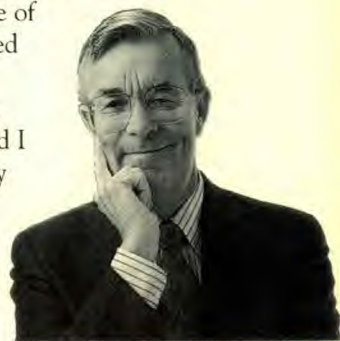


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# Quality Control

Several years ago I read an article about American manufacturing during the late sixties and early seventies. Deluded into thinking that its foreign competitors were too insignificant to take more than a fraction of the market share, American companies became careless in their quality control.

After months of complicated negotiations, one American company signed a contract to provide a Japanese firm with specialized hydraulic equipment. The equipment was delivered and installed, but soon the American company received a complaint that the machinery was leaking hydraulic fluid.

A team of technicians traveled to Japan, but they reported that they were unable to remedy the problem; they had never had to deal with that type of problem before. How was it, the head office wanted to know, that the problem appeared only in equipment installed in Japan? A survey of American companies found out that equipment installed in those factories leaked as well. "Why haven't we heard about it before now?" asked the managers.

The answer? "Our American customers seem to expect less than optimal performance." Apparently employees at American companies found it easier to wipe up spilled hydraulic fluid with a rag than to insist that the equipment perform properly.

In the past 20 years competition from overseas companies has forced American manufacturing to reevaluate its standards of operation. In the process everything from cars to cameras, from televisions to tractors, has reached a higher level of quality and reliability. America has regained its place in the world as one of the top producers of quality-conscious products.

Unfortunately, many Adventist churches throughout North America have yet to learn from the mistakes made by American manufacturing decades ago.

It's tempting to believe that because we have "the truth," we can get by with sloppy maintenance for our buildings or dull, boring meetings and worship services. Yet we're all accustomed to a certain amount of quality in what we watch, wear, and eat, etc.

Quality is one of the watchwords of the nineties. Com-

petition is a fact of life. If I get poor service wherever I shop, eat, or get my car repaired, there are scores of other stores, restaurants, and repair shops eager for my business.

The same is true with churches. The congregation that is careless in its upkeep and maintenance, or is married to lifeless rituals and meaningless traditions, is going to find its members looking for other options—staying away being one of the primary ones.

Our buildings and services needn't be all glitz and glamour. Nor should

we invest time and money in extravagant "extras." But whatever we do, we should do well—to the best of our ability. Even churches with just a handful of members may have a "knack" for doing something particularly well.

One way to assure that your church leaves a positive impression with those who attend—both members and guests—is to take a walking tour in and around the building and pretend you're seeing it for the first time. Take a clipboard and make notes. Weeds in the flower bed? Peeling paint? A door that sticks? A burned-out light bulb? If you were a first-time visitor, would you know how to find the children's Sabbath school? Could you locate the restrooms?

During the service pretend you're unfamiliar with Adventist customs and traditions. Is there a clear progression? Are there opportunities for involvement and participation (other than the offering)? Do lengthy periods of "dead time" ruin the reverent atmosphere?

This is more than just a job for the deacons, the janitors, or the church board. Let everyone be part of a quality management team. Let everyone be responsible for making things work the way they're supposed to. After all, if most of us don't care how things work, and don't help when we can, why should anyone else?

"Whatever your hand finds to do," said the wise man, "do it with all your might" (Eccl. 9:10, NIV). And never is this more important than when we are honoring an awesome God.

*Quality is one of  
the watchwords of  
the nineties.*





# GIVE & TAKE

## YOU THERE IN BORNEO

Because this is the World Edition, we strive to fill it with as much non-North American material as possible. But if we don't receive it, we can't print it. If you're an Adventist in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, or South America, send articles, letters, and Give & Take contributions to the address below. And if you're in North America? Don't stop!



## ADVENTIST LIFE

One morning while caring for Cody, my 3-year-old grandson, I received a business call. Since Cody was happily coloring by the kitchen cupboard, I told him to stay there while I slipped into my study. When I came back, Cody was still by the counter—but had a sticky spoon in one hand and a jar of honey (from the cupboard) in the other.

When I reprimanded him, he hung his little head like a whipped puppy. Then he turned to me and said, "I need a hug, Grandma."

—Mildred J. White, via E-mail

As Americans we lived for many years in the Philippines. One day as our 4-year-old daughter, Kimberly, was playing with her friends, I overheard her talking with a little girl she had just met.

"I'm a Filipino," said the girl.

"Well, I'm a vegetarian," said Kimberly.

—Harold and Shirlee Kehney, via E-mail

## HERALD'S TRUMPET

Hey, kids! Herald, the *Review* angel, is back, and Herald's trumpet is again hidden somewhere in this magazine.

In our last contest (June 5) we received 102 postcards. Then we mixed them all up, closed our eyes, and picked out three winners: Kathryn Ellis from Clarkston, Washington; Bryce Nelson from Conrad, Montana; and Jonathan Martin from San Bernardino, California. These three kids received *Secrets of the Forest*, a *Review* and Herald book by Colleen L. Reece.

Where was Herald's trumpet? On page 14—for the second straight time! Crazy, huh?

If you can find the trumpet this time, send a postcard telling us *where* to the Give & Take address below. The prize is Mrs. White's *Secret Sock*, by Paul B. Ricchiuti.

Have fun—and don't forget to "trumpet" Jesus' love.



## GOOD MORNING, GLORY

**WELCOME TO WORSHIP:** On a trip to Sochi, Russia—near the Black Sea—*Review* columnist Sandra Doran snapped this slide of a young worshiper outside the Adventist church. "They're a vibrant group of believers," says Doran. "They hope to expand their structure, but need funds."

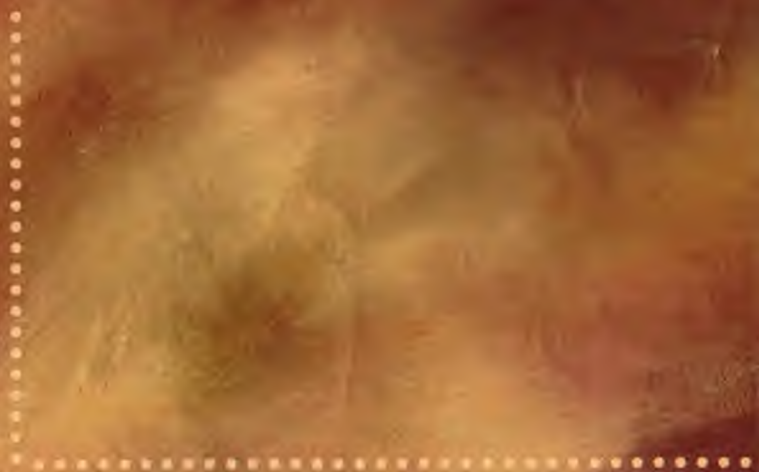
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# Guided by a *Dream*

*Here's a story that's more  
amazing than fiction*





**A**S THEY MOVED quickly into the front row of the balcony, Draga settled into her seat and looked down in amazement. "Look!" she whispered to Luba and Cveta. "Look what is right in front of me. It's the chip out of the railing, just as I saw it in the dream. We have found the people that Jesus told me about."

My wife and I sat spellbound as the three sisters reached the high point of their story. But here's how it unfolded.

Weary of the toil of the day in a Melbourne (Australia) garment factory, Draga looked up from her work toward the woman sitting at the sewing machine across the room from her table. The woman was from the church, and earlier Draga had offered to purchase one of the small items she'd been selling as a fund-raiser. Draga studied her from her own workstation.

"How does she do it?" Draga wondered. "She seems to be happy and have everything she needs. Maybe it's because of the church she talks about. I wonder if I could go with her to church. Maybe that's what I need."

Not that Draga was unappreciative of her job. She wasn't—though the work was tedious at best, the hours long, and the pressure for production stiff. At any rate, what else was there to do for a young female refugee from Macedonia—especially one who did not speak the local language very well?

Meet Draga Bakof. For her and her family, life in Melbourne, with all its drawbacks, was a great improvement over what they'd endured before escaping the tyranny of the Communist regime that had overtaken their homeland after World War II, resulting in the loss of just about all their wealth and property. Not only was the family persecuted for their affiliation with the Macedonian

merchant, was an ardent and unrelenting advocate of freedom of choice, both in politics and religion—a stance simply incompatible with that of Macedonia's new Communist leadership. Fearing for his life, he fled to Australia in 1949.

It would be some eight years before his wife, Stoja, would be able to follow him to Australia with their three daughters, Luba, Draga, and Cveta, and their little son, Michael.

But however joyful the reunion—and however delighted they were to be in a land of freedom—the family quickly realized that their economic survival required diligent effort and hard work on the part of each member. Further complicating matters was the fact that Basil, during his absence from the rest of the family, had fallen into alcohol abuse, with all its attendant problems.

**T**hus it was that Draga, now 17 and hardly able to speak the language of her new country, found herself sitting at a sewing machine in a garment factory, eking out a living. Dirt-poor, she owned only one dress good enough to wear to work. And sometimes when the weather did not cooperate, she would come to work with it still wet from washing the night before.

"Maybe I could just ask her to take me to church with her," Draga reasoned as she eyed her coworker that day in the factory.

"I have never heard of this Seventh-day Adventist Church she talks about. But if I go, I will be able to see for myself if that is what I need in my life."

**Cveta Bakof**

But Draga was totally unprepared for the rebuff she would receive in

don't have anything decent to wear. You are too poor . . . and God does not love poor people like you. And further, you don't speak the language well enough for it to be of any use for you to come anyway. Go find a church where there are people of your own kind."

Draga was crushed. Recalling the tragic day, she said, "It seemed as if the darkest of clouds had rolled in and obliterated the light of the sun. There was no hope for me if God did not love poor people."

Holding back bitter tears, she rushed home to share the painful news with Luba and Cveta. But 11-year-old Cveta, the youngest of the three—and not one to be put off easily—replied, "All right, then, that is just what we will do. There are three churches not far across town where they speak our language, or at least something close to it. There is a Greek Orthodox church, a Russian Orthodox church, and a Macedonian Orthodox church, all with people from our homeland.

We will go and check them out. Then we will decide which one we want to join."

It was the Easter season when the three set out in their quest for a church to join. But even though the family

Orthodox Church (with Basil spending three months in jail for having Cveta christened), but there were also the political problems. Basil, a wealthy

response to her innocent inquiry at the close of the workday. "No, you can't come to my church!" the woman replied. "You



PHOTO BY GARY PATTERSON



heritage was Orthodox, they had no knowledge of the Bible or of the saving grace of Christ. Their religion, rather, had been based on the observance of traditional forms and festivals. Bible study was unheard of, even though the family owned a small Yugoslavian Bible, a gift from a young Methodist couple in charge of the Sunday school Cveta had attended. However, the little volume was regarded more as an icon or good luck charm than something to study and understand. In fact, in Basil's tradition, women were not even allowed to touch the Bible after the age of puberty, lest they defile it, a restriction that he had difficulty enforcing, what with the sisters becoming more and more interested in what the strange little book had to say.

Even though religion had been officially forbidden in their homeland, Stoja, as a faithful mother, had regularly observed the holy days of the church in her home for the sake of the children. Again and again she would remind them, "Don't believe what the government leaders say. Don't believe what they tell you in school. There is a God, no matter what anyone says." Still, the basic motivation for their religion was that of escaping the horrors of eternal damnation, and God as a personal,

loving Saviour was foreign to them.

Setting out on their quest for the true church during the Easter season gave the three an opportunity to see the churches in their finest form. The first three they'd targeted were located within walking distance of one another near downtown Melbourne, with Easter services running virtually round the clock, affording them an opportunity for close-up, almost instantaneous comparison.

In an attempt to take in all the events of the various Holy Week services, the sisters found themselves up all hours of the day and night beginning Holy Thursday. And by midafternoon Easter Sunday they were dogtired. Finding a comfortable place to wait for the evening services to begin, they lay down for a nap. Just before this, however, they'd knelt together—for the first time ever—to seek God's direction in finding His true church. And as they drifted off to sleep, something happened to Draga as she rested between her two siblings.

"Wake up! Wake up!" she suddenly began shouting to Cveta and Luba as she shook them. "I've just had a dream, and I must tell you about it."

Struggling with stupor after this sudden awakening, Cveta and Luba wondered what could be so important about Draga's dream that she had to wake them up so violently.

"Jesus spoke to me in the dream," Draga said breathlessly. "He appeared just as I have seen Him in the pictures. I saw Him from the waist up, and He said, 'So you want to know which church to join? I will show you.'

With a wave of His hand, the three churches [they'd been looking at] appeared before me, and He said, 'None of these is My church. But I will show you My people and My church.' Then with a wave of His hand the three churches vanished, and I saw a large auditorium full of people. As I looked, a man entered from the right side of the stage area, walked to the center, and began to speak to the audience. Then the Lord pointed to the railing in front of my seat. He said, 'See the chip out of the wood here in this spot? It will be the sign that you have found the right place when you see this chip.' Then He was gone!"

The sisters were astonished. *What could it all mean? they wondered. Was it just a dream with no particular significance? Or was it the voice of God speaking to them?*

Since they'd just



Draga, left, and Luba Bakof



prayed for guidance, they took the matter seriously and commenced a search for the people Draga had seen in her dream, a search that would take them to nearly every church structure and congregation in Melbourne.

With their Orthodox background, the girls began with the great cathedrals of the city. Even though Cveta had earlier attended some Protestant churches, it still seemed that God must be leading them to the impressive architecture and liturgy of the great cathedrals. So week after week the intrepid trio journeyed to one cathedral after another, with the same result. Draga would look around and say, "No, this is not what I saw in the dream."

As the weeks turned into months without success, the search became even more desperate. And though they widened it to include smaller and less impressive churches, nothing they found came even close to the clear specifics of Draga's dream. With the passing of the second year, they began losing confidence in their once-sure expectation of finding the church of Draga's dream, concluding that perhaps it really had no significance after all.

By this time their facility with English had improved significantly (particularly for Cveta, the youngest of the three), and they began branching out into more English-speaking settings, both religious and secular. One day three meeting advertisements arrived simultaneously in the mail. One announced a religious meeting for Tuesday evening, sponsored by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Another announced a meeting for Thursday, to be presented by a local Pentecostal

church. The third advertised meetings to commence at a popular theater in downtown Melbourne on Sunday afternoon.

Even though the search for the dream congregation had all but vanished from their minds now, the girls decided to attend all three. On Tuesday, however, friends dropped by just before meeting time, causing them to cancel. The same thing happened on Thursday. On Sunday, though, there was no interruption, and they went to the theater as planned.

Walking into the auditorium, Draga stopped suddenly and looked around. "Something is unusual here, and I am not sure what it is," she said. "It seems as if I have been here before."

"Of course this place looks familiar," responded Cveta with a scornful laugh. "This is where we always come to see Elvis Presley movies!"

But even as they proceeded down to the front and center of the main floor seating area, Draga continued to look around, unsure of just what she was sensing about this place.

Then it happened. As they sat waiting for the meeting to begin, a man walked from the right side of the stage to the center lectern and began to speak—something that, interestingly enough, occurred *only that one evening* during the entire six months of the meetings. The usual set-up was for the speaker to enter from the left. But on that one evening circumstances dictated otherwise.

"This is it!" Draga cried. "This is it. This is the man I saw in the dream."

"But it doesn't look right." She hesitated. "When I saw him in the dream, I was looking down on the stage, but now we are looking up. It just isn't right." But the meetings were good, and the preaching by Pastor Ray Stanley was most informative and inspiring. So the girls, notwithstanding Draga's uncertainty, determined to return the following Sunday.

After attending the Orthodox church on Sunday, as had become their custom, they ate a picnic lunch in the park prior to attending the evangelistic meeting in the theater. It

## Mom and Dad Also Saw the Light\*

BY GARY PATTERSON

Basil and Stoja initially resisted the new faith their daughters had found; a lifetime of conditioning made them feel that rejecting their traditional ties to the Orthodox religion would doom them to perdition. But in time Stoja softened to the sweet, spirited persuasion of the girls, and a year later she joined them in the fellowship of the Adventist Church.

Basil was not so easily persuaded, however. For years he resisted. But while ridiculing their faith, he was frequently heard saying: "When it comes to religion, my girls have it right!"

In 1990 Basil also gave his heart to the Lord. But by then his health was failing as a result of years of alcohol abuse, and the last two months of his life were spent in the hospital. But in an effort to make up for a lifetime of resistance to the Lord, he was a faithful and constant witness to everyone he met. Nurses, physicians, visitors—anyone who crossed his path—heard of the love of God and received an invitation to accept Him.

The family prayed together with him just prior to his passing as he sought the grace of Christ to reunite them in the kingdom of God.

\* To date, Michael has not joined the rest of the family in their faith.

Mom Stoja





# How God Works

BY GARY PATTERSON

"How does one relate to the Bakof story?" I find myself asking. "Why would God choose to reveal Himself to these young immigrant women in such a spectacular manner?"

Perhaps it's because His plan will not be put off by the recalcitrance of those who would not open the church to them when they first were seeking, leaving them with little or no other avenue for learning of His love. Their language, their poverty, and their limited circle of friends had made it extremely difficult to reach them any other way. And who am I, at any rate, to say how God might work to reach His children?

It is not by the gifts of the Spirit that we are to evaluate such a testimony. Rather it is by the fruit of the Spirit.

And we saw this in operation. It was a stiflingly hot day when my wife and I met the Bakof sisters at their church. The temperature was above 100°F (40°C) as southeast Australia suffered under one of the worst heat waves in memory. And

the Bakof family were totally unaware of our plans to meet them that day. Yet the kindness and Christian love they extended to us spoke volumes of the fruit of the Spirit.

Inviting us to the coolness of their home, they shared their hospitality as we listened to their amazing story.

Nor are they content to keep the good news to themselves or within the church family. The Nunawading church that they attend is only about six miles (10 kilometers) from the suburb of Doncaster, where the sisters live. And there is a church in Greensborough—only about three miles (five kilometers) in the other direction. But Cveta and her sisters are determined to work with their local church in its plans to plant a church in their own hometown.

So as we bade farewell on a sweltering February day, Luba and Cveta set out into their neighborhood, Global Mission materials in hand, to give the invitation for others to share the joy of the salvation they've found in Christ.

It was Jesus who said, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20).

was a beautiful day, and before they knew it, they were late for the afternoon meeting.

Rushing to the theater, they found that all the seats on the main floor had been taken. Ushered up to the balcony high above the rest of the audience, they moved quickly to the front row, where Draga settled into her seat and then looked down in amazement. "Look!" she whispered to Luba and Cveta. "Look what is right in front of me. It's the chip out of the railing, just as I saw it in the dream. We have found the people that Jesus told me about."

That night as Draga fell asleep in wonder at what had occurred, she dreamed again. As before, Jesus appeared to her. "So you found the place I showed you," He said. "These people will tell you the truth. Listen to what they say."

And night by night, as the girls attended the meetings, they would return home and study the Bible to see if what they were hearing was true.

This new thirst for biblical information, however, led Draga into a difficult conflict with her father. Sneaking the family Bible from its case, she would read it avidly, becoming so engrossed in it that she'd fail to notice her father's return home. Severe reprimands and threats would follow.

But Draga could not easily be put

off. Again and again she'd sneak the Bible from its case while her dad was away. Angered by her continued disobedience, her dad once threatened to break her hand.

Yet even in his superstitious prohibition, he was somehow pleased with her interest in God. And it didn't seem as bad to him for Draga to handle and read the English Bible. So a compromise was reached: if she would leave the Yugoslavian Bible alone, she could study the English translation all she desired.

Evening after evening the sisters would stay up late checking all they were hearing at the theater against what the Bible says. And it all checked out. One Thursday night, well into the meeting schedule, Luba had a dream regarding the Sabbath. To her amazement, Jesus showed her that the Sabbath was to be celebrated on the seventh day of the week. So convincing was the dream that she persuaded Draga and Cveta to join her in keeping the next Sabbath, only two days away.

Not knowing exactly what Sabbath observance entailed, the three arose on Sabbath morning, dressed in their best clothes, and lit the ceremonial candles of their traditional worship, keeping the day holy as best they knew how.

It was not until the following Sunday evening that Pastor Stanley preached on the topic of the Sabbath,

which the sisters were now eager to hear. Visiting with them in their home on the Tuesday following the meeting, the pastor asked what they thought of the Sabbath. "Oh, we already kept it," they replied. Thinking they did not understand, Pastor Stanley said, "But I only preached on this subject last Sunday. You could not have kept the Sabbath, because we have not had a Sabbath since that sermon." Then, to his amazement, they told him of the dream and of their first Sabbath.

And so it continued throughout the duration of the meetings. Prior to the presentation of certain topics (such as the state of the dead, the gift of prophecy, and healthful living), either Draga or Luba—never Cveta, curiously enough—would have a dream explaining that topic as it would be presented in the next sermon.

As the meetings came to their close, the sisters, absolutely sure now that God had led them to His people, were baptized. Today they rejoice in fellowship with God's people in their local church at Nunawading, near Melbourne. ■

Gary Patterson is director of the Office of Mission Awareness at the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland.





# The Place for Applause

ANGEL MANUEL RODRÍGUEZ

**I**n my local church, clapping during the worship service is very common. Is there any biblical support for this practice?

Clapping during church services is becoming more and more popular in many of our churches, so your church is not unique in this respect. Clapping is mentioned in the Bible as an expression of social and religious feelings. But the ideas associated with this gesture are not always the ones we associate with in our culture.

Four Hebrew verbs are used to express the action of clapping (*macha'*, *nakah*, *saphak*, and *taqa'*), and all of them contain, as would be expected, the idea of striking something or someone. They are used in conjunction with the noun "hand" (Hebrew *kaf*) to communicate the action of clapping ("striking the hands"). The phrase is used in several different ways.

1. *It is an expression of joy at the ascension of the king:* This is a social function of the gesture. When Joash was introduced as the legitimate heir to the throne, those who were present clapped their hands and shouted, "Long live the king!" (2 Kings 11:12, NIV). A religious usage is found in Psalm 47:1, where the psalmist invites all peoples to clap their hands because the Lord is being proclaimed as king over the earth. In Psalm 98:8 the people are exhorted to praise the Lord and the hills to clap their hands because the Lord is coming as king and judge of the earth.

2. *It is an expression of joy on account of God's saving actions:* The return of the people of God from their captivity in Babylon is described by Isaiah as an act of redemption. What the Lord will do for His exiled people is so wonderful and glorious that even nature will rejoice. In this context the prophet personifies the trees of the field and describes them as clapping their hands as a gesture of joy (Isa. 55:12).

3. *It is an expression of disgust and anger:* Balak was angry because Balaam blessed the people of Israel instead of cursing them, and he showed his displeasure by clapping his hands (Num. 24:10). Ezekiel clapped his hands in disgust after seeing the evil practiced in Judah (Eze. 6:11). The Lord clapped His hands in anger and disgust as a reaction to dishonest gain and to the blood spilled by His people in Jerusalem (Eze. 22:13;

21:14, 17). This symbolic action on God's part is followed by His judgment against unrepentant sinners.

4. *It is an expression of malicious glee:* This meaning is found exclusively in the context of defeated enemies. In the prophecy against Nineveh God announces that all those who will hear about His judgments will clap their hands over the city and its misfortune (Nahum 3:19). The Ammonites clapped their hands and rejoiced with malice when Israel was being destroyed by the Babylonians (Eze. 25:6). It is this same contempt and

hostility that those passing by the ruins of Jerusalem expressed by clapping their hands (Lam. 2:15). This gesture was indeed a sign of hostility and derision.

There is no clear evidence that this gesture was part of worship in the Old and New Testaments. In fact, I didn't find the phrase in the entire New Testament. Therefore, there does not seem to be any biblical parallel to what takes place in our churches today.

You may ask, "Why do we do it?" I'm not sure. I suspect that we incorporated clapping into our services from our cultural environment. Clapping is usually associated with the entertainment industry, but has become very popular in televised evangelical religious services. Perhaps we copied it from them.

Leaving aside the issue of cultural influence, I suppose that what really matters is that each person be fully aware of the reasons he or she claps in church. Motivation becomes extremely important in this context. Is it an expression of joy in the Lord and His saving power? Is it only a physical expression or a substitute for what used to be the audible amen? Or is it a recognition of the good performance of the singer or the preacher?

This time, as you can see, I have more questions than answers.

Angel Manuel Rodríguez is an associate director of the Biblical Research Institute at the General Conference.



*Is it an  
expression of joy  
in the Lord?*



## Lessons From

## Piggy's Place



*If only we could find an irresistible way to witness.*

BY EUGENE LINCOLN

**W**E'LL SCARE THEM INTO SOBRIETY," my friend Rex prophesied.

And I agreed. I could imagine people running out of Piggy's Place, staring into the sky and vowing never to take another drink. Fantastic!

#### Lesson One: Take the Offensive

Piggy's Place was a popular tavern in town, located downstairs under the apartment where my mom and I lived. Every night I watched a procession of unsteady people wobbling out the door and down the street. On Saturday nights they seemed to come and go in droves. Often a customer would get into a car, start the engine, and drive a wavy line down Washington Street.

At the time our pastor was encouraging his members to give Bible studies in their homes, aided by slide projectors. Rex and I had attended the training sessions, and we longed to be part of the program, but we were only teenagers. Still, we wanted to get in on the exciting process of seeing God bring miraculous changes into people's lives.

One of the slides intrigued both of us. It showed Jesus, surrounded by a throng of angels, returning to earth in glory. Though it was a victorious image to those who were looking forward to Jesus' coming, we realized that it would frighten those who weren't.

One cloudy Sabbath afternoon Rex and I watched the usual crowd enter Piggy's Place. We lingered at the window till long after dark. In the course of our conversation I asked him, "Do you suppose there's anything we could do to make these people change their ways?"

We considered standing outside and handing out tracts as people entered or left. But we guessed that most folks would throw them away without so much as a glance.

Suddenly Rex lit up as if he had swallowed a 250-watt lightbulb. "I've got it!" he cried.

"Got what?" I asked, hoping that "it" was not contagious.

He fairly shouted at me: "Let's borrow one of the church's slide projectors, get the slide we both like—the one showing Jesus coming in the clouds—put it here by the window, aim it up at the low-hanging clouds, and see if it'll show up."



I almost danced with excitement. "Wonderful!" I exclaimed. "Too bad neither of us has a trumpet. The sound of a trumpet coming from up above would bring people to their knees right there on the sidewalk."

Mom heard us talking (how could she have *not* heard us?). Though she wasn't an Adventist, she was full of practical wisdom. "Don't you think you should talk your idea over with the pastor first?" she asked.

The next Sabbath we approached the pastor, confident that not only would he approve of our idea, but that he would give us some hints on how to embellish it. He was, however, less enthusiastic than we expected.

### Lesson Two: Don't Be Offensive

Although he didn't come right out and say that we shouldn't try it, he cautioned us, "Do you think that frightening people is the best way to make them do the right thing? How do you think people will react when they discover that it was all a hoax?"

To that counsel he added more practical advice: "A scheme like that would take a projection bulb much more powerful than any you could safely use in one of our slide projectors."

On the way home we talked it over. Our voices had become quieter than usual—just about the volume used in a funeral home. We thought it was such a good idea—until we considered all of its ramifications.

Rex spoke reluctantly. "There goes that idea down the drain. I guess the pastor's right. But it sure seemed like a winner."

The pastor knew what it took Rex and me many more years to understand completely: people who are frightened into accepting Christ generally do not remain His followers. When the scare wears off, they often "leave by the back door."

The dreadful fate of those who reject the Holy Spirit's pleadings is indeed frightening, and it has an important part in our message: "The hour of his judgment has come" (Rev. 14:7, NIV).

But the world is longing for a message of hope, the *good* news of salvation. And even the judgment is good news for those who are prepared.

### Lesson Three: Begin and End With Love

Unless we put the love of the Father and His Son foremost in each witnessing presentation, we fail to fulfill the gospel commission. Our message must begin with the words "God loved" before we can say that "he gave his one and only Son" to everyone who believes in him (John 3:16, NIV).

When we begin with God's love, all the other aspects of the full gospel message will fall into place. Because love is the message of Scripture condensed into one word. ■

*Eugene Lincoln is a freelance writer who lives in Hagerstown, Maryland.*



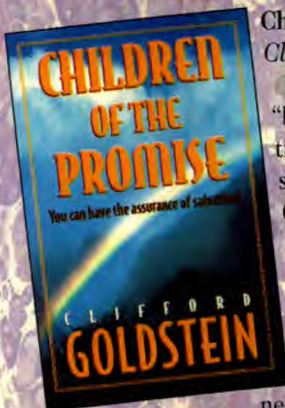
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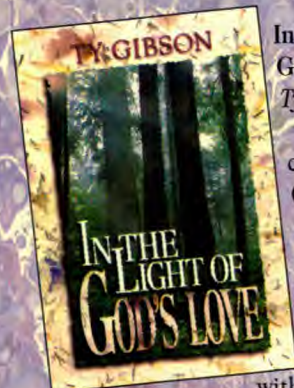
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# When God Is Silent

*How do you face it when the most important Person  
in the universe does not respond to you?*

BY DAVID STURTEVANT





**N**O, NOT MANY OF US enjoy one-sided conversations. Yet they are not uncommon—teachers have them with students, husbands with wives. And many of us have what seem to be one-sided conversations with God.

On such occasions, God seems so far away that we're not sure He even hears our questions, let alone responds.

The Bible, like our lives, is filled with what look like one-sided conversations with God. We find examples in the book of Job and in the Psalms. Psalm 44, in particular, resonates with the markings of a one-sided conversation. A conversation in five parts, it is Israel that does the talking; God is silent throughout.

But God is not a student or a spouse. Nor is His silence the

equivalent of theirs. That's why I believe that Psalm 44 is a complete conversation, with both an answer and a resolution.

The conversation starts with an introduction (verses 1-3)—the people come to God, explaining how they came to hear His name. These verses also establish distance and silence:

*"We have heard with our ears, O God,  
our ancestors have told us,  
what deeds you performed in their  
days,  
in the days of old" (verse 1).\**

It is through people that Israel came to hear of God; God has been silent and distant. With their ears they hear history from people dead and gone, and because we see the present and hear about the past, what we hear with our ears is often far away. We are

necessarily close to what we see, but we can be an eternity away in time and space from what we hear. God's silence, sensed in terms of the distance of time and space, is a theme running from the first to last verses of the psalm.

But with the silence of God comes the faith of the people. The first part is the most clearly poetic of all the sections, and its rhythmic language suggests a confidence in this God who did so much for the ancestors. He drove out the other nations, but them He planted. He afflicted the other peoples, but them He set free. He delighted in them and blessed them with the light of His countenance.

There is much hope in this first section of the psalm; the people are carrying the conversation and are comfortable in talking. Because God





was good to their ancestors, they see no reason to doubt His goodness to them, and they see no reason not to pledge allegiance to Him.

Indeed, they swear allegiance in the second part of the piece (verses 4-8), as the conversation continues.

*"You are my King and my God; . . .*

*Through you we push down our  
foes; . . .*

*In God we have boasted  
continually,  
and we will give thanks to your  
name forever."*

But allegiance is as far as the people can take this conversation. They have introduced themselves, respectfully and trustfully listed the accomplishments of God in the past with the ancestors to whom they are connected, and pledged to be true and give thanks to God's name forever. There is nothing more for them to say. All they can do now is wait for God's response.

But God does not respond. He does not do for them what He did for their ancestors, and they become angry.

The third section (verses 9-16) shows the people's anger. No trusting lyrics here, but instead we come across staccato accusations and indictments.

*"You made us turn back from the  
foe; . . .*

*You have made us like sheep for  
slaughter; . . . you have sold  
your people for a trifle,  
demanding no high price of them"*  
(verses 1-12).

In effect, they were charging that God had done for them the exact opposite of the good He had done for their ancestors. And indeed, the whole section goes counter to Israel's earlier pledge at the beginning of the psalm to give "thanks to your name forever." It is clear the people feel betrayed. They'd pledged themselves to God forever, and it wasn't even clear He'd heard them.

As the conversation continues, there is a pause. The people seem to calm down. In the fourth section (verses 17-22) they plead their innocence. They have not forgotten God or broken His covenant, nor have they turned their backs on God. And yet, in language reminiscent of Job, God has "broken" them "in the haunt of jackals, and covered" them "with deep darkness." The tone of the conversation has changed. This is not a warm preamble,

*They'd pledged  
themselves to  
God forever,  
and it wasn't  
even clear He'd  
heard them.*

nor is it a pledge of allegiance or even a list of accusations. Rather it's the beginning of a list of questions.

Those questions come in the fifth section (verses 23-26). Here the people want to know why: "Why do you sleep, O Lord?" and "Why do you hide your face?" and "Why do you forget our affliction and oppression?" Where the tone of the first section was one of trust and hope, the tone here is one of betrayal and sadness.

These questions come after their pledge of allegiance. They're not questions of mere curiosity, but rather emerge from deep in the heart, stemming from unfulfilled expectations. And they are signs, above all else, of a one-sided conversation. A sleeping person does not converse, one who hides his face does not converse,

and one who forgets does not converse—all charges implied in these pointed questions.

The anguished questions notwithstanding, God doesn't enter into conversation with the people. He gives them, so to speak, His silence.

It is only in the fifth section that they realize that that very silence is a gift. In this section there is acceptance. God's silence is His answer; the conversation is complete. God is not their ancestor; God is not their teacher; God is not their spouse. God is, in short, God and God alone. The rules of normal conversation do not apply, and the rules that do apply are not known. Questions do not work, though it doesn't mean they're not worth asking. Acceptance is all there is, for God is God, and His ways are mystery.

Yet there is still hope; humanity may appeal to the nature of God, which is love. And it is to this that the people appeal in the last two verses of the psalm:

*"For we sink down to the dust;  
Our bodies cling to the ground.  
Rise up, come to our help.  
Redeem us for the sake of your  
steadfast love."*

The psalm does not end with a question; it ends with this, the answer that God is God, with ways unknown to all humanity and resolution that in spite of this, God is love. It is a conversation, it is complete, and it is at its root affirming. ■

\* All Scripture passages are from the New Revised Standard Version.

David Sturtevant wrote this piece while attending a class in biblical literature at Andrews University. He has since graduated from a course in creative writing at Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts.





# What You're Supposed to Do



ROSY TETZ

**D**o you ever watch those nature programs on TV? You might see baby animals playing and being cute. You might see birds building nests and whales jumping out of the water and monkeys swinging through the trees. Animals are so interesting.

You might also see leopards catching deer and eagles swooping down on rabbits and sharks attacking everything in sight. It's very educational and all, but I don't like to watch that. I turn the TV off when animals start killing each other.

Did you know that lions eat only meat? Nothing else! They have to kill other animals to live. That's the way they are made. It is hard to understand, because it is so different from the way humans are made. We don't think that way. We aren't made that way.

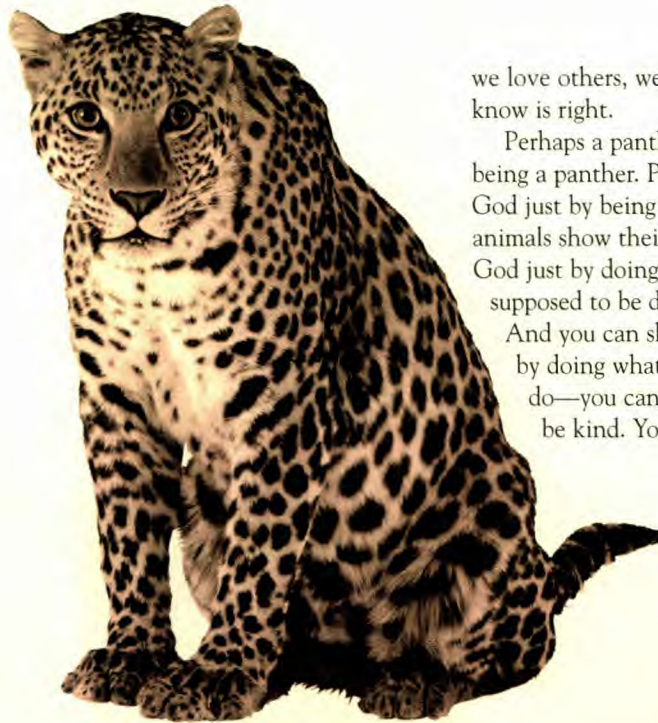
A lion does not feel bad when it kills an antelope. When an owl catches a mouse in its claws, it does not worry whether it is doing the right thing. Animals don't feel guilty.

Humans do. When God created us, He gave us a brain to choose between right and wrong. He gave us rules that can help us decide what is right.

Animals have a different kind of brain. It might seem to us that what they are doing is cruel, but that's because we are looking at it from a human point of view. God didn't make the animals to follow the same rules we have.

The Bible explains why our rules are so helpful: "The purpose of this command is for people to have love. To have this love . . . they must do what they know is right" (1 Tim. 1:5, ICB).

The rules help us learn to love each other. When we love God we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. When



we love others, we are doing what we know is right.

Perhaps a panther honors God just by being a panther. Perhaps a robin loves God just by being a robin. Perhaps animals show their honor and love for God just by doing what they are supposed to be doing.

And you can show your love for God by doing what you are supposed to do—you can love others. You can be kind. You can be thoughtful.



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# Portuguese African Churches on the Move

BY LEO RANZOLIN, GENERAL VICE PRESIDENT, GENERAL CONFERENCE

I was visiting with Carlos Puyol, secretary of the Euro-Africa Division, and Vasco Cubenda, president of the Angola Union Mission, when an explosion shook the city of Luanda, capital of Angola. Several persons died, and many more were frightened by this evidence of the great challenges facing the country. Samba church, one of several churches in Africa that have benefited from a special "roofing campaign," has a capacity for 200 and is located on a beautiful site overlooking the city of Luanda.

Although a bit shaken by the explosion, we soon got back to the matter at hand. The young people told us how difficult it was to get the walls up and that a new roof was still needed for the church. Right now members are worshiping under a large tent draped over the walls.

Pastor Jean-Luc Lezeau, division stewardship director, traveled with us to assist with the sessions in Angola and Mozambique. He conducted a stewardship

seminar in Angola and then continued with us to Lubango, near the Namibia border, for the elections of the South Association Mission.

## Promoting Self-reliance

Delegates were challenged to work on a three-year self-reliance plan for the mission, which has 128 churches and more than 27,000 members. On Sabbath about 9,000 people gathered to discuss the concept of stewardship.

On my last visit to Angola with Edwin Ludescher, now retired, it was not possible to get all the members of the union board together in Luanda because of internal conflict in the country. This time, even though there were some restricted areas, all delegates attended the union board meeting.

Later we flew to Maputo, capital of Mozambique, for the South Mission session. All officers were reelected in this mission, which has 7,400 members and 38 churches. On Sabbath we repeated the program given in Angola to 1,000 people—on a hot and steamy day!

We next traveled to the city of Beira, one hour north of Maputo, for the Central Mission session. The meetings were held at the site of the Mozambique Adventist Seminary, where Rui Valane is principal. The seminary has 46 students and offers classes in theology, agriculture,



**HIGH DAY:** An estimated 1,000 persons participated in the spiritual celebration in Maputo, Mozambique.

typing, and English.

The farm program, under the direction of Enrique Lerma, from Spain, has 42 cows that supply the finest milk in the city, providing much-needed funds to keep the school self-supporting. The Central Mission has 15,840 members and 38 churches.

The highlight of our trip was our visit to the city of Quelimane, headquarters of the North Mission, one of the biggest missions in the world. They have 102,238 baptized members and 698 churches. Some 207,078 persons—potential new members—attend Sabbath School. With such a large membership in Sabbath School, the future looks bright for our people in Mozambique.

The annual council of the Mozambique Union Mission was held in Quelimane. Leaders came from all over the union, which has 125,475 members and 815 churches. All pastors attended a special stewardship seminar by Elder Lezeau and heard messages by Elders Carlos Puyol and Leo Ranzolin.



**NEW LIGHTHOUSE:** The New Samba Adventist Church is under construction in Luanda, Angola's capital.



## Progressive Goals

Girimoio Muchanga, president of the union, is challenging the church in Mozambique to reach 65,000 souls during this quinquennium. Under PENETRATION 2000 they have some daring projects. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) has been a part of the work for the past nine years.

David Tejel, director of (ADRA) in Mozambique, and his team have started a project in the Zambézia province, in the North Mission. Under the leadership of Victor Niconde, the mission has 58 districts and has penetrated 34 as part of the church's Global Mission program to establish Adventist congregations in unentered territories.

Another first was the establishment of



**SONGS OF ZION:** About 9,000 persons heard beautiful music at the spiritual rally in Lubango, Angola.

departments of women's ministries in the Central and South missions, as well as in the union.

Elder Muchanga has been invited for meetings in Portugal and Spain to show our people in Europe the great needs of

the African continent as well as to share the great victories of the gospel in Mozambique.

Our intensive three-week visit in Africa ended with the dedication of the new church in Mujane, about 50 miles north of Quelimane. The roof was donated by Brother McNeilus. About 750 members came to sing, praise God, and celebrate their faith in Jesus Christ! Five ministers were ordained on Sabbath afternoon.

The days of war and strife are over. Our people in Mozambique and Angola want

to fulfill their mission and carry on the message of salvation in Christ, from village to village, from tribe to tribe, from house to house, until the last one is reached!

## NEWS BREAK

## Israel's "Crime of Evangelism" Concerns Adventists

**A** spokesperson for the Adventist Church in Israel has expressed the church's concern over a legislative attempt to "criminalize evangelism." Christian outreach would be a crime in Israel if a bill currently under consideration is passed by the Israeli Knesset, according to the church news agencies.

Speaking at a religious affairs conference, the spokesperson said, "Together with other Christian communities and faith groups, we share serious concern over the recently proposed legislation. Any law that makes it a crime to tell others about what the New Testament teaches would be a very serious denial of religious freedom."

Bill 5757-1996 would make it illegal to encourage religious conversion, with a penalty of a year in prison. "The state of Israel, in the framework of existing laws, is opposed to any missionary seduction to convert religion," the bill affirms, and also outlaws publishing any evangelistic material.

The bill comes after United States television evangelist Morris Cerullo mailed a million Christian booklets to homes in Israel last year. Israelis reacted angrily, burning copies of the booklet in front of the

Knesset buildings in Jerusalem. The legislation is also seen by some to be a way of restricting the activities of "Messianic Jews," ethnic Jews who have become Christians.

A visit by delegates of the United Christian Council to Nissim Zvili, secretary of the Labor Party and one of the bill's sponsors, recently discussed the bill's implications, the European Baptist Press Service reported.

"Of course we want a democracy. But even in a democracy you can't have people changing their religion," said Zvili, responding to the question.

However, because of concern expressed by many religious groups, this restriction of religious liberty may be reconsidered. Though the bill reached the first stage, another two stages are required for any bill to become law. Restrictions already exist in Israel's penal code that limit the freedom to encourage Jewish adherents to change their beliefs.

The Adventist Church's views on the proposed legislation were also expressed in a recent letter to the Israeli prime minister by John Graz, director of the General Conference Public Affairs and Religious Liberty Department.

Reacting to comments made by Graz, the Embassy of Israel, in Washington, D.C., stated that "the bill has not



# Muhammad Ali's Search for Perfection

BY ELLA M. RYDZEWSKI, ADVENTIST REVIEW EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

**T**he hulking figure of Muhammad Ali moves slowly now. He takes pleasure in past victories and most recently the award he received at the Academy Awards for the Oscar-winning documentary on his life, "When We Were Kings."

Living on a farm near Berrien Springs, Michigan, the champion boxer has struggled with Parkinson's disease for 16 years. The end of life doesn't look as far away as it once did, and he dreams of an Islamic paradise. But Muhammad Ali still reads the Bible, even if only to critique it, perhaps to assure himself that he did right in converting to Islam years ago. For whatever reason, he takes pleasure in finding "errors" in the Bible. He says, "Since holy scripture is from God, it should be impossible to find mistakes. . . . [Because] it doesn't, you can't trust it 100 percent. There are many conflicting verses in the Bible."\*

Of course, unlike most religious writings with a single writer,

numerous authors wrote the Scriptures over the centuries, colored by their own experience. We can't expect perfection because they were not perfect, even if inspired. But the main message—how God saves us—remains infallible. As I understand the Bible, our human natures will never reach perfection in our carnal bodies. We are perfect only as Christ stands in our place and offers us eternal life. Through a process called sanctification we grow in maturity—the work of a lifetime. But those who look for perfection (other than Christ's) in this life will never find it. From ancient sacred writings to modern life, we cooperate with God.

That is why Muhammad Ali will never find a perfect Bible. It is why we will never find a perfect church, pastor, friend, or parent. It's not a perfect world—and the sooner we accept that fact, the happier we will be.

\* "Ali's Amazing Grace," *Washington Post*, June 8, 1997.

## NEWS COMMENTARY

## NEWS BREAK

been endorsed by the government of Israel or the prime minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu."

"Freedom has always been a challenge," said Graz. "We believe that a dialogue between religions and churches would be better than an aggressive reaction to proselytism that denies the basic principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This amendment, if it is voted, will erode a certain image of Israel."—*Adventist News Network*.

### PacificRim Press Publishes Unauthorized Materials

PacificRim Press, an independent organization that is not affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, is now publishing Ellen White's writings without the consent of the Ellen G. White Estate or the Pacific Press and Review and Herald publishing associations.

According to White Estate officials, the publisher, based in Loma Linda, California, has advertised both published and unpublished materials, and a Bible with Ellen G. White comments.

The White Estate believes that PacificRim may have ignored copyright laws and may also have copied material directly from *The Published Writings of Ellen G. White*, the CD-ROM produced by the estate in 1990.

Officials say PacificRim simply does not have the unpublished writings it advertises.

Regarding the Bible, the White Estate board of trustees has opposed placing Ellen White's writings within the same covers as the Bible for many years. "It is not in the interest of truth and the church to give critics the opportunity to accuse Adventists of having their own Bible and placing Mrs. White's writings on a par with the Sacred Canon," says Norma J. Collins, an associate director of the White Estate.

For more information, contact the Ellen G. White Estate at 301-680-6540, or fax 301-680-6559.

### ADRA Project Recognized by Jordan Government

The government of Jordan has chosen the Adventist Development and Relief Agency's community-based rehabilitation project as the best nongovernmental organization development project in Jordan, reports General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg.

Jordan's King Hussein officially submitted the project for a United Nations' Roosevelt Award. The project is funded by ADRA/Canada, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the Jordanian Swedish Medical Society.





## Test Your Global Mission IQ

1. By the end of 1997 a new church building will stand in Niksic, Montenegro, the result of a church-planting project sponsored by the Trans-European Division. Meetings conducted in 1992-1993 resulted in the baptism of 27 youths. These new believers shared their faith with other students. In 1996 more meetings were held, and an additional 25 youths joined. The offering, Hands Across the World, will provide US\$67,500 for the church. In what country is this republic that borders the Adriatic Sea?

A. Poland                      B. Slovakia  
C. Yugoslavia                D. Turkey

2. The five most populous countries having no Seventh-day Adventist congregation are: Morocco, North Korea, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. True or false?

3. In Western and Northern Europe, state churches claimed the allegiance of most citizens for centuries.

Today an irreligious philosophy and lifestyle are popular. We see few conversions to biblical Christianity.

For 1997 the Trans-European Division set aside £50,000 (US\$82,000) to minister to these unbelievers. What do we call this religion?

- A. Materialism                B. Baha'i  
C. Animism                    D. Secularism

### Answers

1. C. Yugoslavia, where most of the population affiliates with the Serbian Orthodox Church.

2. True. Their populations are:

Morocco, 30 million  
North Korea, 24 million  
Afghanistan, 23 million  
Saudi Arabia, 19 million  
Syria, 16 million

3. D. Secularism. Europeans have largely departed from the Christian faith of their parents and grandparents, rejected the Bible as authoritative, and denied the existence of God. The plan being launched by the Trans-European Division selects target areas in which church planters will form groups using biblical styles of witness and worship that appeal to the needs of secular people.

## NEWS BREAK

### Potomac ABC Named Top Christian Retailer

For the fourth consecutive year *Christian Retailing* magazine has named Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store (ABC) in Takoma Park, Maryland, the number one Christian retailer in the United States.

The honor came as a result of the magazine's survey of Christian bookstores, which was sent to 150 of the most likely top 500 Christian retailers. According to the survey, Potomac ABC was \$1.5 million ahead of its nearest competitor.

"We appreciate the people in our community who have faithfully shopped in our store and told others about the products that we carry," says manager J. Clyde Kinder. "They are the ones who have made our store number one."

### News Notes

✓ Two Adventists who were jailed for distributing Bibles in Laos last October were set free on June 6, reports General Conference president Robert S. Folkenberg.

Pastor Houmphanh and Ba See attended church again, and Houmphanh brought the morning message. "While the church rejoices, there is uncertainty about what the future might hold. Please continue to pray for

the church in Laos and especially for Pastor Houmphanh," Folkenberg says.

✓ **The Voice of Prophecy can be heard anywhere**, if you have Internet access, a sound card, and external speakers. The necessary software (Real Audio or Streamworks) can be downloaded free from the radio station's Web site carrying the broadcasts you want to hear.

To listen to broadcasts through the Internet, first access the VOP Web site at [www.vop.com](http://www.vop.com) and point the mouse to "Where You Can Hear Us." From there you can link to any of several radio stations that broadcast VOP on the Internet.

✓ **Larry Evans**, New Jersey Conference president, was recently elected president of Georgia-Cumberland Conference. Evans replaces Gordon Bietz, who became president of Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee.

### What's Upcoming

Aug.	2	Global Mission Evangelism Day
Sept.	6	Lay Evangelism Day
Sept.	13-20	Adventist Review Emphasis
Sept.	20	Family Togetherness Day
Sept.	27	Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for the Trans-European Division



# Eight Ways to Deal With Guilt

BY VICTOR M. PARACHIN

**S**EVERAL YEARS AGO LETITIA Baldrige, author of several etiquette books, made a mistake that caused her great embarrassment and guilt. A friend who worked with the United Nations

prepared a dinner in honor of Baldrige and her husband, Robert. The friend invited ambassadors from two countries.

"I would have been honored to attend," recalls Baldrige, "but I wrote the engagement on the wrong night in my appointment book. When dinner was held, Bob and I were at the movies." Baldrige was oblivious to the problem until the next morning, when she heard her friend's hurt voice on the telephone. "At that instant I wanted to die," Baldrige says.

After apologizing on the phone, she went to her friend's office to apologize in person, then she wrote a formal four-page letter and sent it to her friend with two dozen roses.

Six months later she sent more flowers to commemorate the half-year anniversary of her blunder. Baldrige's friend had already forgiven her by this time, but now called and repeated, "Letitia, you are forgiven."

**A**t one time or another everyone makes a mistake, commits an error of judgment, or says or does something wrong. The result produces feelings of guilt. When guilt is not managed properly, its impact can be damaging. Guilt feelings reduce self-confidence, batter self-esteem, and erode the quality of life. Guilt can completely destroy a relationship. Here are eight ways to deal with guilt creatively and realistically.

**1. Realize that guilt is a warning light.** Let guilt be a positive emotional tool alerting you that something may be wrong. Whenever guilt prompts you to look a second time and alter behavior, it becomes an ally, not an enemy. Consider the example of singer and songwriter Neil Diamond.

In 1972, when he was at the height of his career, Diamond abruptly took four years off. The reason for that decision was an uneasy conscience. "I had gone through one marriage, two kids, and was into my second marriage when I told myself, 'Wait. I'd better step back and take a look at





what I'm doing and where I'm going. I don't want this marriage to end in divorce," he explains.

As a result, he interrupted his career for 48 months. "It was probably the most important period of my life," he says. "I took four years to get to know my children, my

wife, and myself." By responding to the warning light of guilt, Diamond not only prevented a repeat of the same mistakes, but emerged from those four years a more relaxed, happier individual. Diamond says he felt freer onstage and was an easier person to live with.

## **2. Recognize the value of guilt.**

Guilt feelings have a positive value when people respond to them and correct behavior that is inappropriate,

offensive, hurtful, or destructive. Guilt opens the door for people to grow, learn, and mature. "People who do wrong things to themselves or to others should feel guilty for what they have done," declares rabbi and author Harold Kushner. "If their guilt moves them to do good, to balance the bad—if it makes them more careful, more caring—it will have been constructive guilt."

**3. Take time to analyze guilt.** Guilt feelings can often be corrected, reduced, and even eliminated after they are carefully analyzed. This was an effective strategy for Susan, a West Coast advertising agency executive. As a working mother she felt guilty whenever her 8-year-old daughter



*Have you ever felt  
as though you  
could just die?*



became sick at school. "I would blame myself for working and feel very guilty that I wasn't home for her or that I wasn't spending enough time with her," she says.

However, Susan has learned to analyze her guilt this way: "After the initial wave of guilt, I calm down and try to look at it realistically. I ask myself two questions: "Do I want to quit my job?" The answer is always no. "Is there an alternative to my present situation?" The answer is also no. So I go over it thoroughly in my mind and always come to the same conclusion: it's tough to work full-time and raise a child at the same time, but the other options are far less appealing." Because she could analyze her guilt, Susan effectively reduces it and does not allow it to affect her life or the life of her daughter adversely.

**4. Respond rationally.** After analyzing your guilt, respond appropriately and rationally. If you have done something or failed to do something for which you feel guilty, then take corrective measures. Apologize, ask forgiveness, and make amends, if possible. Don't let guilt feelings drive you to extremes, as they did one man when his brother died. For his brother's grave the surviving brother ordered a tombstone that was a life-size replica of a Mercedes-Benz, complete with windshield wiper and TV antenna. The model Mercedes was carved out of fine stone from a quarry in Vermont. The sculptor spent a year creating it. The cost to the surviving brother was \$120,000.

And the reason for that elaborate headstone? Guilt. For years he had promised to buy his brother a car, but had never found the time to do it. When his brother died suddenly, the surviving brother was consumed by guilt over his neglect. However, his response was both extreme and irrational. In his case a healthier and more rational response would have been to make a donation to charity in his brother's name combined with a personal resolve to act upon promises

and commitments made.

**5. Turn the guilt over to God.** Invite God to remove the stain of guilt from your life. One of the great passages of God's forgiveness is Psalm 51, believed to have been written by King David after he recognized the

*Guilt  
feelings  
reduce self-  
confidence,  
batter  
self-esteem,  
and  
erode the  
quality of  
life.*

wrongness of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. David's prayer can be a model for all of us: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love," he writes. "Cleanse me . . . and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (Ps. 51:1-7, NIV). That psalm is an admission that there are some things that we cannot do for ourselves. One of those is the ability to feel whole, healthy, and clean again. We all need God's help to lift the burden of sin and guilt.

**6. Remind yourself you are not perfect.** "How unhappy is he who cannot forgive himself," noted the

Roman writer Publilius Syrus.

Remember, you are not perfect. Don't expend great energy in self-blame or self-hatred, thus making yourself miserable. Accept God's forgiveness, and forgive yourself as well. Keep in mind this advice from C. S. Lewis: "If God forgives us, we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him."

**7. Learn from the experience.**

There is no point in repeating the same mistakes. Look back at what went wrong. Resolve not to let it happen again. Letitia Baldrige certainly learned from her mistake. Today she double-checks the date of every appointment.

**8. Drop it, forget it, and move forward.** Once you have taken all appropriate steps to make amends and correct behavior, drop it, forget it, and move forward. "One of the most important of all skills is that of forgetting," declares minister and author Norman Vincent Peale in his book *A Guide to Confident Living*. "To be happy and successful you must cultivate the ability to say to yourself forget it!" Don't let guilt torment your life. Walk away from experiences that are over. Learn your lesson, be wiser, avoid useless postmortems over mistakes, and move your life forward.

By using these strategies, you can manage guilt feelings in a constructive manner that will lead to greater enjoyment and better quality of life. In addition, you will also discern the difference between healthy guilt, which sounds an alarm when something is definitely wrong, and unhealthy guilt, which takes on a life of its own and bears no relation to reality. ■

*Victor Parachin is an ordained minister, counselor, and freelance writer.*





# The Best Is Yet to Come

*Oakwood inaugurates a new president.*

**BY CALVIN B. ROCK**

*The following address was given at Oakwood College, Huntsville, Alabama, on April 13, at the ceremony inaugurating Delbert W. Baker as the tenth president of the college. We have retained the oral flavor of the address.—Editors.*

**I** THINK IT IS TRUE THAT THE MOST significant inauguration ever was the one at the wedding feast in Cana 2,000 years ago. The changing of the water into wine, called by John “this beginning of signs” (John 2:11, NKJV), marked the start of Christ’s stellar career—it was the first public demonstration of His powers, His “coming-out event.”

As king of the universe, Christ was God and with God from the “unbegun beginnings” of eternity—and since eternity knows no origin or conclusion, His divine office, though perpetuated, was never inaugurated. But when He garbed Himself in our flesh and became a man, He submitted not only to our form of birth; He engaged the rituals of Temple blessing at age 12, baptism at age 30, and shortly thereafter, formal inauguration when He christened His ministry with the miracle at Cana.

By that special act He modeled the principle of progress inherent in all gospel endeavors: the principle that states that for God’s people and His institutions, “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Prov. 4:18); the principle He emphasized to the awestruck Nathanael when He said, “Thou shalt see greater things than these” (John 1:50), and that He enunciated to the woman at the well when He said, “The water that I shall give [you] will become

... a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (John 4:14, NKJV).

The “water to wine” experience reminds us that God’s wish for His people is not failure, but success; that His plans do not allow for insufficiency or for a static state or business as usual or the status quo; that no matter what the character of the past or present, in His scheme of things the best is yet to come.

That thought, I submit, is particularly pertinent for our consideration today. This is not just the inauguration of a president; it is the beginning of a unique chapter in Oakwood’s history. Today we christen a new administration, but more than that, we put in place the leadership that begins the second century of Oakwood’s life and that will carry us into the millennium just over the horizon.

No Oakwood presidency has begun with more possibility and visibility than that which Providence has decreed will be the “Baker era.” Not only is the century’s “wine of time” about to expire, but so are many of its methodologies and techniques, and in fact, many of the basic presuppositions that have informed past operations and relationships. The value systems that have undergirded our Christian institutions must remain inviolate, but many of the systems that we have valued, the operational strategies that have brought us to this place, are inadequate for the future.

Whoever wrote the book *Modern Man Is Obsolete* was correct. That is true in regard to both the pervasive way in which the institutions of society, including higher education, are being impacted by the technological revolution of our day and with respect to the dizzying rate at which change is occurring. And when one adds to the urgency of calibrating this institution’s systems to the high-tech forces of the



information age, the challenge of maintaining mission in an era marked by rancor in politics, duplicity in religion, idolatry in athletics, unscrupulousness in journalism, naked greed in industry, and worst of all, the continued dissolution of the family system, it is clear that the challenges of tomorrow are daunting.

There is another major threat to this institution's viable progress—the misguided view of some who conclude that in the light of our government's policies on racial integration, and Heaven's powers of heart regeneration, we no longer need structural accommodations such as historically Black conferences and colleges, that the wine of modified self-determination that gave legitimacy to Oakwood's birth and 100 years of existence has also been consumed by time.

But I rise to declare that in spite of the technological and sociological and moral dynamics that weigh against the fabric of this institution; in spite of naivete regarding the value of cultural pluralism by even some well-meaning individuals; in spite of an economic climate that is a growing threat to higher education everywhere; in spite of the fact that as God's people we battle "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12); in spite of pressures from without, and sometimes treachery from within, we must, by these stately affairs, renew our resolve to fulfill God's purposes, believing that by His omnipotent will the best is yet to come.

Which leads us to observe that though it was Christ's power that changed the water into wine, it is the labor of the human participants that is



**NAD president Alfred C. McClure congratulates Dr. Baker upon presentation of the Presidential Medallion.**

most detailed by John.

Mary, who had hidden the secret of Jesus' birth for 30 years, saw in these circumstances the opportunity for Him not only to rescue the embarrassed hosts, but to declare Himself as the Messiah. And although He seemed to demur, she hopefully urged the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it" (John 2:5, NKJV). She had full confidence in His concern and His powers, but she understood that their manifestation required strict obedience.

Yes, Oakwood, the best is yet to come, but it will not come willy-nilly; it will not come helter-skelter; it will not come "no matter what"; God does not always turn the water into wine. By Moses He turned water into blood, and as promised through Jeremiah, He later changed water into gall (Jer. 9:15). No, God's blessings are not automatic. However, they will come, board, faculty, staff, alumni, students, constituency, and community, if and when the command "Whatsoever He says, do it" is faithfully obeyed.

My father-in-law, the late Elder F. L. Peterson, who served here from 1945 to 1954, left just before the quantum leaps that the school took in the sixties and seventies. At that time there were a lot of questions about church support and constituency backing here. So when he resigned, after a very rich and memorable tenure, it was with grave concern for the future. According to a family member, as

he left he was heard to remark somewhat in exasperation: "May the Lord have mercy on Oakwood College!" Some 20 years and 1,000 more students later, I told my good friend Mervyn Warren of the Peterson remark—to which he replied in his calm and logical manner, "Well, evidently He did!" Yes, praise God, He did! But He did it through people. Through deans and vice presidents and presidents' wives and

many others—and He will do it again.

But since as our leader, Mr. President, it is primarily your vision, your inspiration, your articulation, that will point the way, I say to you most particularly, "Whatsoever He says, do it!"

No matter how futile it sounds—do it!

No matter how insignificant it seems—do it!

No matter how lonely you become—do it!

No matter how other schools are functioning—do it!

No matter who gets the credit—do it! And the best will be yet to come.

And what did Jesus tell them to do? He told them to fill the water pots with water. And how did the servants respond? John records in John 2:7, "So they filled them [all six, that is] to the brim" (NIV).

Administration, faculty, and staff, you must help fill up the vessels of opportunity that face the Baker years—and fill them to the brim. Do not plan conservatively, do not cooperate marginally, just fill the vessels to the brim and leave miracles to Him. For the best is yet to come.

You must fill all six of the challenges before you.

Fill up the vessel of academic excellence; fill it with the water from ghetto schools and sparsely equipped classrooms of the land, and watch Jesus



turn it into the wine of graduate students and first-class professionals.

Fill up the vessel of racial pride; fill it with the diverse waters of "upper-class" self-sufficiency and "middle-class" indifference and "ghettocentric" cynicism and watch it turn into the fine wine of personal motivation and group mobility.

Fill up the vessel of denominational identity; fill it with the water from the public school system that comprises 80 percent of each of Oakwood's freshman classes, as compared to the 30 to 40 percent that matriculate at other SDA colleges, and watch it turn into the wine of church loyalty and service.

Fill up the vessel of individual dignity; fill it with the water drawn largely from the streams of rap music and "hip-hop" Ebonics and watch it convert into lovers of history and connoisseurs of excellence.

Fill up the vessel of ethnic solidarity; fill it up with the waters of radical individualism so characteristic of Western society, add in the differing cultures that come here from 21 countries abroad, and watch them turn into the sweet wine of concerned togetherness and "reaching back" so badly needed in the Black community.

Fill up the vessel of spiritual dedication; fill it with the water of lives bombarded with evil images from birth and pressured by peers and problems and the lusts of other things entering, and watch it reconstitute into the wine of commitment to Christ, richly flavored with the assurance of salvation, and you will see that the best is yet to come.

It is instructive to note that Christ's inaugural act does not fit the usual concept of a miracle as the dramatic acceleration of the processes of nature. This was not, as were most miracles, a case of Christ's curing broken existence—it was a case of His creating new existence altogether. Grape juice is not an improvement of water—water, like sunshine, is an additive to the process; grapes are the essential ingredient. Luther had it right when he said that the product Christ made was not wine that had come from water, but rather "*dein wein der wasser gewesen war*," or "wine

that displaced what once was water," or "the wine that water used to be."

The truth is, Christ really didn't need the help of water. But He chose this formless, colorless, tasteless substance as an object lesson of what He can do through us weak and feeble creatures. And behold how gladly water obeys His will:

Dumb water sensed His design and caused an axhead to swim.

Deranged water heard His voice and ceased from its raging.

Deep water felt His presence and made a pavement for His feet.

Depleted waters intuited His wish and filled the disciples' nets with fish.

And at Cana, caged water looked up into its Creator's face and blushed itself into wine.

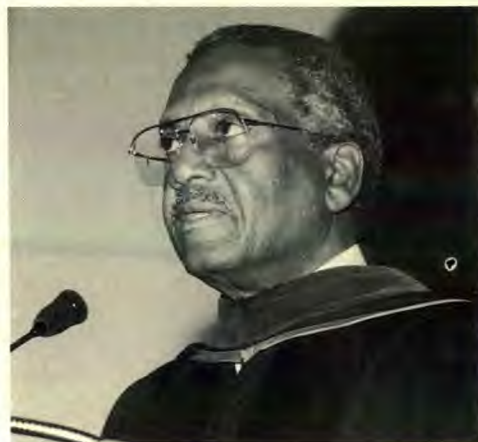
But the greater lesson of the "wine to water" experience is not the sudden display of His might; it is the constant presence of His power. His making wine without grapes or vine or sun emphasizes the fact that for 4,000 years in every cluster that hung upon every vine He'd been changing water into wine; and to the wonder that in His kingdom, His people and His work are always being transformed into something better; that we poor, inadequate materials, ennobled by His presence, are constantly upgraded into more useful instruments; that in the regular maturations of grace, as in the daily maturing of the grapes, the best is yet to come.

I did some calculations in reviewing the inaugural model at Cana and noted that in John 2:6 each of the stone jars that the servants filled contained 20 to 30 gallons of liquid. The multiplication of six barrels times 25 gallons (what I take to be an approximate average for the vessels) indicates that Jesus contributed no less than 150 gallons of wine. Caterers expect that one gallon of liquid is sufficient for at least 15 persons. What Jesus did was to produce joy and satisfaction for more than 2,000 people—a fact that suggests that either there were many more guests than originally planned or that the first wine was so good that they drank much more than expected.

Either way, Christ's method is contrasted with that of Satan. Satan always gives the best first and then brings out the worst. Jesus changes the water to wine, but Satan changes the wine to slime; his method takes us from laughter to tears, from joy to sorrow, from the heady wine of instant gratification to the brackish waters of pain and guilt. But with Jesus, no matter how humble or painful the start, we always know that the best is yet to come!

It should be clear, then, that when Christ's orders are followed, there is no crisis of quality or volume or distance too great to be overcome. When Christ's orders are followed, there is no mountain too high to climb, or river too wide to ford, or valley too deep to walk. When Christ's orders are followed, the curses of Balaam, the taunts of Sanballat, and the threats of Sennacherib may try your patience and test your resolve and strain your ingenuity, but they will not prevail if "whatsoever He says" you will do. For when this formula is followed in every case and in every place, the best is yet to come!

None of this suggests that we should demean the past or discount prior blessings. We must mean it when we pray to the Lord of Anna Knight and Eugenia Cunningham and J. L. Moran—"Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee; lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget thee"—and cherish their hard-fought, tear-stained victories as stepping-stones for present and future



**Dr. Calvin B. Rock presented the presidential inaugural address at Oakwood College.**



attainments, as living proof that in His cause the best is yet to come.

The account of the inauguration at Cana ends in verse 11, where John, who was an eyewitness and participant at that event, states, "This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him" (NKJV).

Herein lies the ultimate consequence of Christ's deed—the manifestation of His glory.

Because He was God when He was not working obvious miracles, what was experienced at Cana was not additional glory, but present glory more clearly revealed. As the lightning that illumines the night is already there, slumbering in the dewdrop, hiding in the mist, drifting in the clouds, so was Christ's glory already there, cloaked in human flesh. Jesus was a living miracle; His created universe is a living miracle—and so is Oakwood College.

We read that on one occasion Jesus converted five loaves and a few fish into enough food to feed 5,000 men, besides women and children, and when He finished, 12 baskets remained—that there was more left over when He finished than when He began, and we are amazed. But consider our dear Oakwood, where in 1896 He gathered 16 students whose descendants, in spite of being the most affected by America's recessions and depressions and being told often that an Oakwood education is a second-rate experience, have now grown to number 1,600—each of the original having multiplied 100-fold in 100 years—and I say to you, "That is a miracle," and that these all attest to His glory.

For the Greeks, glory was wisdom and craft; for the Romans, glory was power and domination; for moderns, glory is popularity and possession; but for Him, it is compassion activated by infinite power exercised in behalf of needy humanity. And because Mary believed and the servants obeyed and Jesus willed, not only were the recently recruited disciples confirmed in their trust in their leader, but the word quickly spread and the populace began to follow Him.

That glory is still available for Oakwood. But remember, Mr. President, it is *God's* glory, not yours. You are a tool, a servant. You are commissioned to lead out in the pouring of the water—God does the miracle. As my wife has sometimes appropriately reminded me, we leaders do not possess; we only perform. We possess neither the position, nor the property, nor the power—we are only stewards; the glory is His.

*When Christ's  
orders are  
followed, there  
is no crisis of  
quality or  
volume or  
distance too  
great to be  
overcome.*

It is wonderfully true that by God's glory:

A stick became a serpent.

A fish became a ferry.

A mule became a mouthpiece.

A storm became a zephyr.

Water became wine.

Death became sleep.

And because the Chronos of Eternity was willing to become the Kairos of Calvary, "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,)" (John 1:14). That glory reversed our fortunes, redeemed our failures, redirected our agendas, refocused our priorities, and transformed our night of hopeless captivity into the day of joyous fellowship with Him and with one another.

But as good as all that is, the best is yet to come. For before He left, He told

us that the wine is a symbol of His blood and that He would not taste it again until He drinks with us in the kingdom. He who inaugurated His earthly service at the wedding at Cana will initiate our heavenly sojourn at the marriage of the Lamb that will inaugurate the school of the hereafter.

Yes, as our prophet reminds us: "Heaven is a school; its field of study, the universe; its teacher, the Infinite One." There "the grandest enterprises will be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations will be reached, the highest ambitions realized. And still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend" (*Education*, pp. 301, 307).

"And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and more glorious revelations of God and of Christ" (*The Great Controversy*, p. 678). In other words, even throughout the foreverness of eternity, as we progress from one unimagined state of knowledge and insatiable joy to another, the best will still be yet to come.

I confess to having given some thought to other possible titles for this address. I thought of the topic "From Cana to Canaan," or "From the Ram in the Thicket to the Lamb With the Ticket," or "From the Wedding of a Man to the Marriage of the Lamb." But I decided to stay with the original, for any way you put it, the real beauty, the essential message, the salient, unimpeachable truth of this inaugural experience, is that whether it's the Messiah in the womb or the Creator in the tomb—

With Jesus at the feast,

With the Redeemer in the boat,

With the Saviour on the shore,

With Michael at the grave,

With the Lord upon the throne,

With the Master in the plans and our programs in His hands—past is ever prologue and the best is yet to come! ■

*Calvin B. Rock, a general vice president of the General Conference, served previously as president of Oakwood College.*





# The Cross Is Not Lost

BY STEPHEN G. DUNBAR

**W**hen we arrived in Hong Kong, the sun had already begun to hide itself behind the mountains to the west. By the time my wife, Sabine, and I had faced a

customs officer, retrieved our luggage, and wheeled the carts out of the airport to the lineup at the taxi stand, darkness had already set in.

It was obvious that this was the kind of city you could easily lose someone in. All around us flashing lights proclaimed the benefits of staying at the Hilton, drinking Coke, and shopping at the Stanley.

During the half-hour drive to Tsuen Wan Adventist Hospital my thoughts seemed as cluttered as the mishmash of neon signs around us. I roamed over our past year in Korea as volunteer teachers and our focus there: sharing the gentle assurance of the cross. I wondered about the people in this huge city of millions and how they would ever find His peace. A horn honked, echoing and reechoing until it shattered away my thoughts and I was once again reading neon signs.

After we unloaded the taxi, checked in at the hospital, and got things settled into the guest room, the sky opened and rained the kind of big, soft drops that warn of something more powerful to come, cutting our exploratory evening walk short of any inspiring discoveries.

Back in the room and drying off, I began my exploration of the city from behind closed windows. Six or seven buildings reached up and down to embrace each other, forming a rough circle around a dark, forsaken courtyard. The rain, now pelting the message of a passing monsoon-like cloudburst, had set in and seemed to emphasize the shadow and gloom of the courtyard in front of me. Engrossed in thought, I turned down the shades, retired from the scene, and went to bed.

Reflections that had been shattered earlier by the loud noises of the city's traffic swept together again as I tried to sleep. "How could anyone live here?" I questioned myself. "How can people find any comfort in the choking clutter of a city like this? How do Jesus and His sacrifice fit here?"

Despite eerie gusts that seemed to parallel the storm in my thoughts, sleep eventually took over my mind and scattered those questions like leaves in October.

*Though it  
may not flash  
neon red,  
the cross  
is not lost.*

## A Hopeful Sign

The alarm was mercilessly punctual and beeped out its "Get up! Get up!" for 10 long seconds. We had made plans to see the city, and as brilliant sunlight sneaked in around and through the shades, I felt this beautiful day would reveal wonderful discoveries. Cranking open the blinds, I searched the skyline of the city in daylight.

There in what was a forsaken city lot, lost the previous night in the darkness of the storm, was a cross.

Towering above the church nearby, that cross seemed to be reaching upward to the people of the surrounding buildings and reflecting the morning sun. I knew that this, my first discovery of the morning, would shape the remainder of my day and my thoughts for a very long time into the future.

**I**n the first view of that day God had revealed the answer to the searching questions of the stormy night before. I heard Him say softly, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). His love still reaches people.

While I was gazing at that cross, which I had not been able to see in the darkness of the storm, He gently reminded me that even in the most cluttered cities of the world, though it may not be flashing neon red, the cross is not lost. ■

*Stephen G. Dunbar, an English and mathematics instructor for foreign students in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada, was a volunteer missionary to Korea when he wrote this article.*





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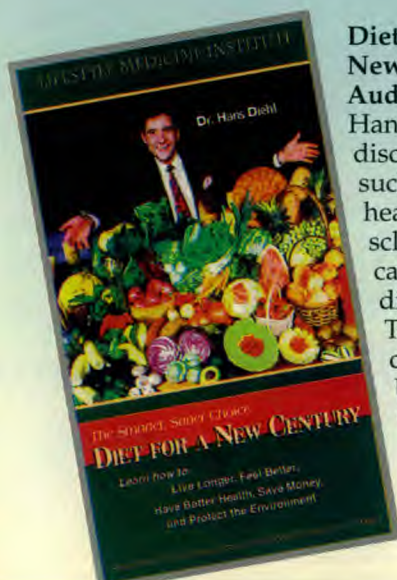
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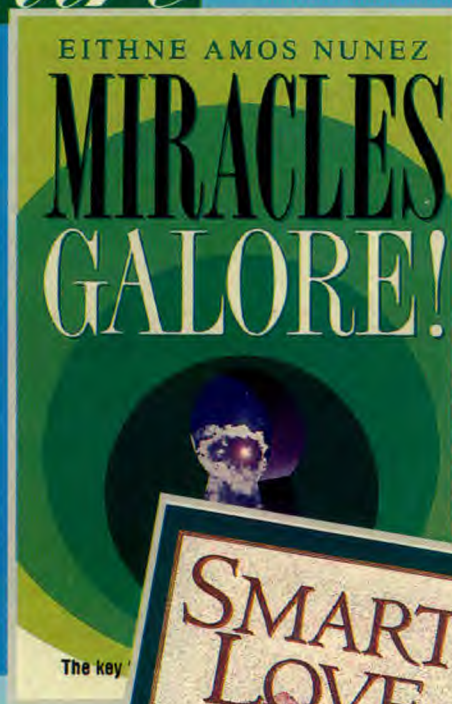
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